

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 060007

72

ORIGIN NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 CCO-00 SS-15 SSO-00 ISO-00 IO-10 SR-02 ORM-01

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USDEL ASWAN IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 060007

TOSEC 665

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR EG IS

SUBJECT: EGYPTIAN AID OFFER FOR SINAI FLOOD VICTIMS

REF: A. GENEVA 1773; B. CAIRO 2485; C. STATE 49113

FOR ASST SECY ATHERTON

1. YOU SHOULD BE AWARE THAT WHEN QUERYING DEPARTMENT
MARCH 17 ABOUT ISRAELI CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES IN RAFAH
JUNCTION AREA OF SINAI (SEPTTEL), EGYPTIAN EMBASSY COUNSELOR
WAHBA ASKED ABOUT SITUATION OF SINAI FLOOD VICTIMS AND
ALLUDED IN PASSING TO FACT THAT EGYPT HAD REQUESTED US
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PAGE 02 STATE 060007

ASSISTANCE IN GETTING ISRAEL TO ACCEPT EGYPTIAN RED

CRESCENT AID FOR VICTIMS THROUGH ICRC. WAHBA WAS BRIEFED ALONG LINES GENEVA REFTEL, TO EFFECT THAT ICRC (WHOSE REPS DEPARTMENT FROM PAST EXPERIENCE KNEW WERE IN SINAI AND IN REGULAR CONTACT WITH ICRC HEADQUARTERS) HAD FOUND THAT NEEDS OF FLOOD VICTIMS HAD BEEN ADEQUATELY MET AND SITUATION WAS WELL UNDER CONTROL. DEPTOFF DID NOT REACT TO WAHBA'S LOW-KEY REFERENCE TO EGYPTIAN REQUEST FOR US INTERVENTION.

2. FROM ABOVE, IT APPEARS CAIRO MAY NOT LET SUBJECT OF ITS REQUEST FOR US INTERVENTION GO AWAY. HOWEVER, US APPROACH TO ISRAELIS FOR RECORD WOULD PROBABLY NOT SIT WELL WITH

JERUSALEM IN VIEW OF FACT THAT EGYPT IS MAKING HOSTILE PROPAGANDA OVER SINAI FLOOD SITUATION (CAIRO REFTEL) AND WE WOULD RECOMMEND AGAINST IT. EARLIER APPROACH TO ISRAELIS WHICH ON EVE OF YOUR DEPARTURE YOU ASKED BE MADE AT WORKING LEVEL WAS NOT INFACIT MADE BECAUSE BY THEN ORIGINAL SITUATION LEADING TO OUR RECOMMENDATION SUCH APPROACH BE MADE IN FEBRUARY 28-MARCH 3 TIME FRAME HAD BASICALLY CHANGED, I.E. ISRAELIS HAD OFFICIALLY NOTIFIED ICRC OF THEIR REFUSAL OF EGYPTIAN ASSISTANCE AND HAD INFORMED DEPARTMENT OF THIS FACT (STATE REFTEL). THUS, ANY US APPROACH TO ISRAEL NOW WOULD NOT CONSTITUTE FRIENDLY ADVICE ON HOW TO HANDLE UNRESOLVED PR PROBLEM, BUT INSTEAD WOULD BE REQUEST FOR REVERSAL OF GOVERNMENTAL DECISION. ROBINSON

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